'Interactive Session' Becomes Lesson On Recruiting Minority Instructors

By Kirsten Goldberg

New York—The program was called "Introduction to the Independent School Teaching Experience for Candidates of Color," and it was billed as a chance for beginning minority teachers to find out from a panel of experts what a career in private schools would be like.

But the hoped for "interactive session" at the annual meeting of the National Association of Independent Schools here became something rather different. It was, participants said, a hard lesson in the difficulties of minority recruiting.

Only two "candidates of color" showed up.

"Two candidates is not acceptable, especially for a meeting in New York City," said Randolph L. Carter Jr., director of minority affairs for the N.A.I.S. "We're not reaching people."

The fierce competition for minority teachers, which has led many public-school districts to offer special bonuses and other incentives, may be even more intense in the private sector, many here noted. This is so, they said, because private schools often have the disadvantages of lower salaries and an "elitist" image.

"Everyone knows the trends: Fewer people are going into education and that includes fewer minorities," said Manasa Hekymara, executive director of the Independent School Alliance for Minority Affairs, a group formed by 23 schools in Southern California to recruit minority students and teachers.

"It's tough to find any teacher right now," she said.

But all the indicators at last month's annual meeting here—and activities slated in several other cities this month—seem to point to an even tougher search for minority teachers.

Nine Job-Seekers

The N.A.I.S. annual conference has become something of an employment marketplace, with prospective teachers seeking out schools and schools seeking candidates.

This year, some 600 job-seekers—out of 7,000 convention participants overall—signed up for interviews.

Only nine were minorities.

The two candidates who attended the panel discussion had themselves graduated from independent schools.

"That told us about our outreach," Mr. Carter said. "The only people who know about private schools are private-school graduates."

For years, he and others said, independent schools have relied heavily on word-of-mouth endorsements and returning alumni to staff their teaching positions. Now, some schools are beginning to recruit teachers as intensively as they recruit students, they said. But the effort has yet to reach into minority communities.

"Independent schools are not known in minority communities," Ms. Hekymara said. "Word has to get out that schools are interested in minority teachers."

Efforts to promote independent schools to prospective minority teachers also run up against history, Mr. Carter said.

"Independent schools have a negative image as 'segregation academies' of the South," he said. "But it's a time-warped image. I think most schools really do want diversity."

According to N.A.I.S. statistics, recent strides in minority enrollment have not been matched by increases in minority faculty members.

Little Growth in Numbers

For the past four years, minority enrollment at independent schools has increased by about 0.5 percent a year, and last year minorities made up 11.2 percent of enrollment at member schools.

By contrast, 3.5 percent of independent-school teachers are minorities, a figure that has been increasing by less than 0.2 percent annually.

The gap worries many educators. Said Ms. Hekymara: "The importance of minority teachers as role models can't be underestimated. It's important for both minority students and white kids to see minority teachers in responsible positions."

The recruiting of students and teachers, she said, "has to go hand-in-hand."

"If independent schools are truly to become diverse institutions, they really need to think in terms of the school as a whole," she said.

Regional Recruiting

Ms. Hekymara's California group has recruited 81 minority students for its schools since the alliance was formed three years ago. But though its goals also include the recruitment of faculty members, she said, a lack of funds and manpower has limited that effort.

This week, groups in two other parts of the country will hold seminars on recruiting minority faculty. The Maryland Association for Independent Schools will have a day-long meeting on March 9 at the Glenelg Country School, and Channels for Educational Choices, a Boston association, will conduct a seminar March 8 at the Middlesex School in Concord, Mass.

Earlier this year, a job fair sponsored by private schools in Atlanta drew about 100 minority teacher candidates, according to Mr. Carter.

The seminars and job fairs help, he said, but often private schools are too limited in their search and come to job fairs unprepared to make commitments.

"Public schools are going to the South, are recruiting heavily, and they come to job fairs prepared to make offers," he said.

Representatives from independent schools often cannot make job offers at such events, but must invite candidates to the schools for interviews or for a trial teaching period, he explained.

Such a selection process is too lengthy, Mr. Carter argued, because top minority teacher candidates often receive several job offers. "For some schools, by the time they make an offer, it's too late."

Looking to "nontraditional" sources for minority teachers has often become a necessity, both Mr. Carter and Ms. Hekymara said.

'National Strategy'

That includes efforts to attract retirees and people in mid-career, they said, and recruiting from the pool of school alumni.

"We need whole new ways of looking at how we educate people about teaching," Mr. Carter said.

The minority-affairs director said he wants to appeal to minorities who have gone into other careers, "but have a seed of social consciousness that isn't satisfied."

"I think a lot of them would sacrifice a little income" to take teaching jobs, he said.

The N.A.I.S. needs to increase its efforts to reach potential minority teachers, hold more job fairs, and promote teacher-intern programs, Mr. Carter said.

"We need to do just flat-out recruitment," he said. "I want to begin to create a national strategy."

Retaining minority teachers is also a worry. Above, teacher at Sidwell Friends School who officials say was lured away by better job.

Finn Warns N.A.I.S. of Threat from Public-School Reform

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disproportionately low representation of private-school students in his sample and said both assessments could provide only tentative comparisons.

Still, he insisted, the data indicate that "the advantage private schools have is not very great."

Small Difference Found

Results from the 1986 NAEP reading test, which measured the skills of 36,000 students in grades 3, 7, and 11, were released in February in the report *Who Reads Best?* Delayed for more than five months because of an apparent "anomaly" in its findings, the report did not include data on the 2,962 private-school students taking the test.

According to Mr. Finn, however, private-school 3rd graders averaged a score of 39.3 out of a possible 100 on tests of reading comprehension, while their public-school counterparts averaged 37.9.

In the 7th grade, private-school students scored 52.2, and public-school students scored 48.4. For the 11th grade, the scores were 60.1 and 55.6, respectively.

The private-school sample included Roman Catholic and other religious schools, Mr. Finn said. The NAEP mathematics assessment, scheduled to be released next month, will show similar results, he added.

A 'D-Minus' Score

The Education Department's chief research official also presented what he said were newly analyzed data from the 1986 NAEP assessment of knowledge in history and literature. It included 180 independent-school students, out of a total of 7,812 11th graders tested.

The assessment was the subject of the book *What Do Our 17-Year-Olds Know?*, which Mr. Finn wrote with Diane Ravitch, adjunct professor of history and education at Columbia University's Teachers College.

Results of the history test were, in Mr. Finn's words, "accurate but reprehensible." Overall, public-school students answered 54 percent of the questions correctly, with college-bound public-school students answering 60 percent correctly.

For nonpublic schools, the results were only slightly better, he said, with an overall average of 60 percent and an average for independent-school students of 63 percent.

On the literature assessment, public-school students answered an average of 51 percent of the questions correctly, with college-bound public-school students averaging 57 percent. The average score for students in nonpublic schools was 58 percent, and for those in independent schools 60 percent.

"I consider a score in the low 60's on this a D minus," Mr. Finn said. He said he was writing an article on the private-school data for publication in *Phi Delta Kappan* magazine.

No School Effect?

Mr. Finn argued here that such small differences in performance might be solely attributable to influences in the students' backgrounds.

For example, he said, more than twice as many independent-school students taking the tests reported that their parents had graduated from college.

"Parent education correlates very closely to school performance," Mr. Finn said.

"With differences that large in parent education, it is conceivable that there's no school effect showing up here at all."

Independent-school students are also more likely than public-school students to have participated in preschool programs, to watch less television, take more "core" academic courses, and attend school more regularly, the NAEP sample indicated.

Noting that much of the current reform movement represents an effort by public schools to more closely approximate private schools, Mr. Finn warned that the differential in student achievement must be enlarged for private schools to remain competitive.

'Doing Something Right'

"The qualities of effective schools are remarkably like the qualities independent schools have always had," he said.

Public-sector activities aimed at curriculum improvement, school restructuring, professionalization of teaching, alternative certification, and choice are avenues toward those qualities, he suggested.

"It suggests that you indeed have been doing something right," he said. "But I think it probably also poses for the long run the gravest danger that independent schools face at the hands of government."

The danger, Mr. Finn said, is "the probability that a vast, publicly financed enterprise is going to come to resemble your enterprise in all respects save one: It will be free."

If independent schools had a commanding lead in student achievement, then this would be a "distant threat," Mr. Finn concluded.

"But in general your lead is only modest and it is able to be overtaken unless you sprint forward."

NAEP Performance: Mr. Finn's Comparison

History		Literature	
Students	Correct Answers	Students	Correct Answers
All	55%	All	52%
Public	54	Public	51
College-bound public	60	College-bound public	57
All nonpublic	60	All nonpublic	58
Independent	63	Independent	60

Demographic Characteristics

	Independent	Public
Mothers graduated from college	58%	23%
Fathers graduated from college	66	30
Watch TV one hour or less per day	50	21
Family has rules for watching TV	21	11
Plan to go to 4-year college	71	71 (academic track)

New Data Show More Minorities Going to College

New federal data indicate a jump in the number of minority college students and in the proportion of recent minority high-school graduates attending college.

Black enrollment in higher education increased by some 5,000 students from 1984 to 1986, marking the first time since 1980 that it did not decline, the Education Department reported last week.

Total postsecondary enrollment reached a record 12.5 million students in 1986, according to the preliminary report by the department's center for education statistics.

White enrollment increased slightly during the two-year period, it says. But because Hispanic and Asian enrollments climbed relatively sharply, it notes, both white and black students represented smaller proportions of the postsecondary-student population in 1986 than in 1984.

In addition to enrollment statistics gathered by the department, the report cites rates of participation in higher education based on Census Bureau data.

According to those statistics, the college-going rate for black high-school graduates between the ages of 18 and 24 rose from 26.1 percent in 1985 to 28.6 percent in 1986—the first such increase since 1981.

The enrollment rate for Hispanic high-school graduates in the same age group showed a comparable increase, rising from 26.9 percent to 29.4 percent, the study found. That rise halted a two-year decline.

The rate for white graduates dipped slightly between 1985 and 1986, the report says.

Overall, 34 percent of 18-to-24-year-old high-school graduates were enrolled in postsecondary institutions in 1986, it notes, up from 33.7 percent in 1985.

Two-year institutions enrolled 37 percent of all postsecondary students in 1986, up from 35 percent in 1984, according to department statistics. Such institutions enrolled 47 percent of all minority students in higher education in 1986, a 2 percent increase from 1984. —J.M.

DATABANK

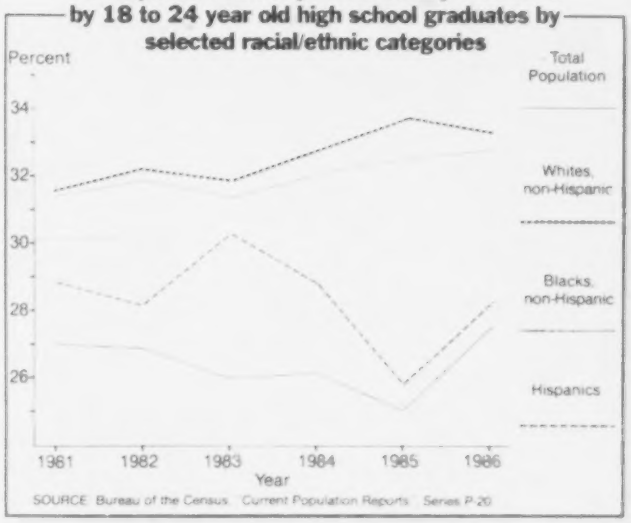
Enrollments in Institutions of Higher Education, Fall 1976 to Fall 1986

Type of Institution and Race/Ethnicity of Student	Number, in Thousands						Percent Distribution					
	1976	1978	1980	1982	1984	1986	1976	1978	1980	1982	1984	1986
All Institutions												
Total	**10,986**	**11,231**	**12,087**	**12,388**	**12,235**	**12,501**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
White, non-Hispanic	9,076	9,194	9,833	9,997	9,815	9,914	82.6	81.9	81.4	80.7	80.2	79.3
Black, non-Hispanic	1,033	1,064	1,107	1,101	1,076	1,081	9.4	9.4	9.2	8.9	8.8	8.6
Hispanic	384	417	472	519	535	624	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.2	4.4	5.0
Asian or Pacific Islander	198	235	286	351	390	448	1.8	2.1	2.4	2.8	3.2	3.6
American Indian/Alaskan Native	76	78	84	88	84	90	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Nonresident alien	219	253	305	331	335	344	2.0	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.7
Public												
Total	**8,641**	**8,770**	**9,456**	**9,695**	**9,458**	**9,722**	**78.7**	**78.1**	**78.2**	**78.3**	**77.3**	**77.8**
White, non-Hispanic	7,095	7,136	7,656	7,785	7,543	7,650	64.6	63.5	63.3	62.8	61.6	61.2
Black, non-Hispanic	831	840	876	873	844	855	7.6	7.5	7.2	7.0	6.9	6.8
Hispanic	337	363	406	446	456	539	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.6	3.7	4.3
Asian or Pacific Islander	166	195	240	296	323	372	1.5	1.7	2.0	2.4	2.6	3.0
American Indian/Alaskan Native	68	68	74	77	72	79	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Nonresident alien	145	167	204	219	219	226	1.3	1.5	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8
Private												
Total	**2,345**	**2,461**	**2,630**	**2,693**	**2,777**	**2,779**	**21.3**	**21.9**	**21.8**	**21.7**	**22.7**	**22.2**
White, non-Hispanic	1,982	2,058	2,177	2,212	2,272	2,264	18.0	18.3	18.0	17.9	18.6	18.1
Black, non-Hispanic	202	215	231	228	232	226	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.8
Hispanic	47	55	66	74	79	84	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7
Asian or Pacific Islander	32	40	47	55	67	76	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.6
American Indian/Alaskan Native	9	9	10	10	11	11	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Nonresident alien	73	85	101	113	116	118	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9
Men												
Total	**5,794**	**5,821**	**5,868**	**5,999**	**5,859**	**5,885**	**52.7**	**50.1**	**48.5**	**48.4**	**47.9**	**47.1**
White, non-Hispanic	4,814	4,613	4,773	4,830	4,690	4,646	43.8	41.1	39.5	39.0	38.3	37.2
Black, non-Hispanic	470	453	464	458	437	436	4.3	4.0	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.5
Hispanic	210	213	232	252	254	292	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.3
Asian or Pacific Islander	108	126	151	189	210	239	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.5	1.7	1.9
American Indian/Alaskan Native	39	37	38	40	36	40	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Nonresident alien	154	180	211	230	231	232	1.4	1.6	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.9
Women												
Total	**5,191**	**5,009**	**6,219**	**6,389**	**6,376**	**6,615**	**47.3**	**49.9**	**51.5**	**51.6**	**52.1**	**52.9**
White, non-Hispanic	4,262	4,581	5,060	5,167	5,125	5,268	38.8	40.8	41.9	41.7	41.9	42.1
Black, non-Hispanic	563	601	643	644	639	645	5.1	5.4	5.3	5.2	5.2	5.2
Hispanic	174	205	240	267	281	332	1.6	1.8	2.0	2.2	2.3	2.7
Asian or Pacific Islander	89	109	135	162	180	209	0.8	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.5	1.7
American Indian/Alaskan Native	38	41	46	48	46	51	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Nonresident alien	65	73	94	101	104	111	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9

Note: Because of underreporting and nonreporting of racial/ethnic data, data estimated when possible. Also, due to rounding, detail may not add to totals.

SOURCE: U.S. Education Department

Participation rates in postsecondary education by 18 to 24 year old high school graduates by selected racial/ethnic categories



SOURCE: Bureau of the Census, "Current Population Reports," Series P-20

CAPITAL DIGEST

Suter Seen as Nominee For Rehabilitation Agency; May Heal Internal Rift

President Reagan is expected to select Susan S. Suter, the state rehabilitation director in Illinois, to head the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration.

The appointment will be announced after a routine background check by the Federal Bureau of Investigation is completed, according to officials in the Congress and the Education Department.

Ms. Suter would replace Justin W. Dart Jr.

Mr. Dart was forced to resign last year after he publicly criticized the management of the R.S.A., which is part of the department's office of special education and rehabilitative services.

Mr. Dart's resignation was the culmination of a long-brewing dispute that pitted him and directors of state rehabilitation programs against the assistant secretary in charge of OSERS, Madeleine C. Will.

Ms. Suter—who, like Mr. Dart, is disabled—was one of 80 state rehabilitation directors who signed a letter accusing Ms. Will of usurping Mr. Dart's authority.

The Illinois director's anticipated appointment is expected to help mend the rift between OSERS and the state officials.

Special-Education Grant Awarded to N.C. Center To Assist the States

The Frank Porter Graham Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has received an $11-million federal contract to help states implement the 1986 special-education law.

Under the contract awarded by the Education Department, the center will set up a National Early Childhood Technical Assistance System.

The center will offer resources, information, and training designed to help state officials extend special-education services to handicapped infants and toddlers.

The Education of the Handicapped Amendments Act of 1986, P.L. 99-457, provides incentives for states to serve all handicapped 3- to 5-year-olds and establishes a new grant program for serving disabled infants.

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Bennett Urges Pentagon Role in War on Drugs

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tary of Transportation James H. Burnley 4th, and other top federal officials.

Mr. Bennett's call for increased military involvement in anti-drug efforts was among a number of pointed recommendations in his five-minute address.

While other panelists described their agencies' increased efforts to end drug use, Mr. Bennett painted a grimmer picture of the nation's drug problem. "We must face the truth," he said. "While we are winning some battles, we are in real danger of losing the war on drugs."

"While public sentiment has changed profoundly, the drug trade and the drug problem are as serious as they have ever been," he said.

In addition to his call for an aggressive anti-drug effort by the U.S. military, the Secretary said he favored expanding federal officials' authority to search incoming cargoes and mail and restricting air traffic to specific, constantly monitored routes.

He also advocated building more prisons, adopting tougher sanctions for drug offenses, and expanding forfeiture laws that allow the seizure of drug pushers' assets to help pay for enforcement, court, and incarceration costs.

He also reiterated his call for testing prison parolees for drug use as a condition of their paroles.

'Awash in Drugs'

In contrast to Secretary Bennett's emphasis on measures to reduce the supply of drugs, some panelists stressed the other side of the equation, calling for stepped-up education efforts aimed at reducing demand.

"Victory will be ours when we end the demand," Secretary Bowen argued. "We have to get to young people before they start using drugs."

Mr. Bennett said that while he also supported such efforts, "if the country is awash in drugs, lasting reductions in drug use will be very difficult indeed."

The view that drug education is a small—and sometimes ineffective—part of the campaign against drug use is one Mr. Bennett has often expressed.

Last year, members of the Congress questioned his commitment to drug-abuse education when he proposed reducing federal funding for such programs to half the 1987 appropriation of $200 million.

For the 1989 fiscal year, however, the Secretary has recommended spending $250 million on drug education.

Mr. Bennett's previous proposal to cut drug-education funds was alluded to again last week in anonymous, written questions contributed by audience members who came to hear the panel. "Aren't you giving mixed signals?" one question asked.

Mr. Bennett replied, "We have found that states weren't doing a whole lot for that money. There's plenty of money out there for drug education."

John Walters, an assistant to the Secretary, said Mr. Bennett's response referred to an Education Department study that found that the "drawdown" on federal drug-education grants distributed to the states had been minimal during the first and second quarters of this year.

He said federal officials were contacting the states in an effort to find out the reasons for the inactivity.

Another anonymous question read by the panel's moderator pointed out that Mr. Bennett had advocated teaching children in kindergarten through 12th grade to avoid drugs in the 1986 pamphlet *What Works: Schools Without Drugs*.

However, the questioner noted, the Secretary called for just two years of drug education in the "ideal" core curriculum he proposed this year in his plan for the hypothetical James Madison High School. Under that proposal, 9th and 10th graders would receive anti-drug instruction as part of a required, comprehensive health-education class.

"Most kids arrested for drug pushing are alums of drug-education programs," Mr. Bennett asserted in his response.

Many such programs fail to point out to students the penalties of drug use, he added.

He said students should be given the anti-drug message through both drug education and tough school policies against drug use.

"And the message should be this: The use of drugs is wrong and will simply not be tolerated," he said.

State Involvement in Substance-Abuse Education, 1986-87

State	State Requires	Minimum Curriculum Standards	Certification Requirement for All Teachers
Alabama	Yes (Y)	Yes (Y)	No (N)
Alaska	N	Y	N
Arizona	Y	Y	N
Arkansas	Y	Y	Y
California	Y	Y	N
Colorado	Y	Y	N
Connecticut	Y	N	N
Delaware	Y	Y	N
District of Columbia	Y	Y	Y
Florida	Y	Y	N
Georgia	Y	Y	N
Hawaii	N	Y	N
Idaho	Y	N	N
Illinois	Y	Y	Y
Indiana	Y	N	Y
Iowa	Y	Y	N
Kansas	N	N	N
Kentucky	Y	Y	Y
Louisiana	Y	Y	N
Maine	Y	Y	N
Maryland	Y	Y	N
Massachusetts	Y	N	N
Michigan	N	Y	N
Minnesota	Y	Y	Y
Mississippi	N	N	N
Missouri	N	N	Y
Montana	N	N	N
Nebraska	Y	N	N
Nevada	Y	Y	Y
New Hampshire	Y	N	N
New Jersey	Y	N	Y
New Mexico	Y	Y	N
New York	Y	Y	Y
North Carolina	N	N	N
North Dakota	Y	N	N
Ohio	Y	N	Y
Oklahoma	N	N	N
Oregon	Y	N	N
Pennsylvania	Y	Y	N
Rhode Island	Y	Y	N
South Carolina	Y	N	N
South Dakota	N	N	N
Tennessee	N	Y	N
Texas	Y	Y	N
Utah	Y	Y	N
Vermont	Y	Y	N
Virginia	Y	Y	N
Washington	Y	Y	N
West Virginia	Y	Y	N
Wisconsin	Y	Y	N
Wyoming	N	N	N
Total number with requirement	38	32	11

SOURCE: U.S. Education Department

Philadelphia Agrees To Aid Asian Students

Continued from Page 1

phia case is far more specific than the remedy the Court ordered in *Lau*.

It requires the district to review the placement of all limited-English-proficient Asian students in regular and special-education classes and to develop a plan to revise instructional programs where necessary.

In addition, the district will be obligated to recruit and train more personnel who speak the students' native languages in order to improve assessment, counseling, and communication with parents and students.

Widespread Problem

The action in Philadelphia highlights the problems faced by educators in numerous school districts where recent waves of immigrants from Asian countries have settled.

More than 250,000 Asians enter the country each year under both regular quotas from each country and special refugee resettlement programs, according to an official with the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

While special programs for Spanish-speaking students have become common in districts with significant numbers of such students, efforts to address the needs of Asian students are much more sporadic, according to experts interviewed last week.

"A lot of districts are coming to realize they have to make additional efforts and change programs for these children," said James Lyons, counsel for the National Association for Bilingual Education.

But, as in Philadelphia, "if school districts don't begin to step up services to this neglected population, there will be more litigation," he warned.

The lawsuit, *Y.S.* v. *School District of Philadelphia* was filed by the Education Law Center, a nonprofit firm based in Newark and Philadelphia. "We had begun to receive information about situations where kids were just lost—they were totally unable to relate to the instruction they were receiving," said Leonard Rieser, the plaintiffs' lawyer.

The case of Y.S.

For example, Y.S., one of three students named in the suit, is a Cambodian refugee who enrolled in the Philadelphia schools in September 1982. He was initially enrolled in English-as-a-second-language courses, but these and all of his other subject-matter courses were taught exclusively in English.

"In part because he received no assistance from anyone who could speak his native language," the lawsuit alleges, "Y. has been unable to make substantial progress in school."

In September 1985, Y. was placed in a special-education class, after having been classified as a mentally retarded student through the use of a test instrument developed for English-speaking students.

In addition, the lawsuit alleges, "the district employee who wrote Y.'s Individualized Education Program had never met Y. or his family."

One of the most alarming aspects about Y.'s case, and others like it, said Mr. Rieser, is that the district failed to communicate with Y. or his parents in their native language regarding his progress or placement in special education. "Consulting with parents is a very integral part of" the Education of the Handicapped Act, he said, "and if you can't communicate to parents, the whole thing breaks down."

Special-Education Placements

The placement of limited-English-proficient students in special-education classes may be a common practice, said N.A.B.E.'s Mr. Lyons.

"One reason for it is structural and fundamental, because special education is where the money is," he said, noting that funding for special education has increased far more in real terms than programs for L.E.P. students.

"You have very sincere officials saying 'Well, if we put them in special education, there are resources available, and we can give the students greater attention, therefore it's the best we can do for them,' " he explained.

"It's tragic, because we've stigmatized the kids in the process," he added. "It's a case of kids chasing dollars, instead of the dollars being used for what's best for the kids."

Such practices, the Philadelphia suit alleged, violate both state and federal laws, and constitutional guarantees of equal educational opportunity.

School officials in Philadelphia have been making efforts to serve immigrants, said Robert Lear, a lawyer for the district, but "we are admitting there are some youngsters in the school district that did not get all of the services they were entitled to."

The problems posed by recent waves of immigrants are "extremely difficult," he said, because they often include students who have received little education in their home country and are thus not proficient in their native language, let alone English.

"Most of the immigrants we received prior to the last few years arrived with a reasonable academic background, so we could put them into a regular school and expect they would succeed," he added.

Other school districts face similar problems, he noted. "We agreed to a plan to develop a plan because nobody's got the answers."

Refugee Trauma

In addition to language difficulties, Asian immigrants often experience difficulty adjusting to a culture that is radically different from the one they are used to, a problem that is compounded by racial intolerance and violence in this country, experts noted.

Refugees also commonly suffer the continuing effects of traumas and deprivations caused directly or indirectly by wars in their native countries and by repeated relocations. Very few educators are adequately prepared to address these complex and interrelated problems, the experts said.

"One of the things we've had to educate people about is the now familiar stereotype that Asian students are all succeeding in school," said Mr. Rieser. "There is some truth to the stereotype, but there are also Asian students who are doing very, very, badly in school. Somehow that just wasn't being recognized."

Settlement's Terms

Under the agreement reached with plaintiffs in the lawsuit, district officials agreed to attempt to contact all L.E.P. Asians of school age who dropped out before graduating, to inform them that they have the right to return to a regular school or enroll in an adult-education course.

As of last week, U.S. District Judge Louis Pollak had not approved the proposed settlement, but lawyers on both sides of the case said they anticipated that he would.

The agreement, which district officials have already begun implementing, also includes:

- A requirment that both oral and written communications to parents be in a language they understand.
- A review of the educational program of each Asian L.E.P. student, to be completed by the end of this school year.
- The establishment of a new position of district coordinator for the education of L.E.P. students.
- The creation of a six-member advisory committee, with three members appointed by the plaintiffs and three by the district.
- The development, by June, of a remedial plan to address the instructional needs of Asian L.E.P. students, including assessment and counseling in their native language and a revised curriculum for the district's E.S.L. program.
- A provision for reviewing and revising the remedial plan, subject to court approval for the first four years.